

Annually more than 50,000 low-income households with legal problems cannot afford an attorney and cannot be served by existing legal services programs.

During the recent recession some *pro bono* programs have seen an **18 percent increase** in needy persons registering for help.

The number of *pro se* litigants continues to increase in our courts.

Increasing the number of *pro bono* attorneys and expanding *pro bono* programs is necessary to meet the needs of the poor for access to justice.

What can I do?

- ⇒ Recall your own experience with the needs of the poor for access to justice.
- ⇒ Review the Tool Kit's resources.
- ⇒ Visit with your local judges and bar leaders on how all can collaborate to address the problems of access to justice for those who cannot afford an attorney.

The Tool Kit is located on the Supreme Court's website under "News & Publications" – "Publications" – "Handbooks & Manuals." The direct link to the Tool Kit is -- www.courts.mo.gov/page.jsp?id=4975.

The Tool Kit was developed for the Supreme Court by its Committee on Access to Family Courts (CAFC).

The CAFC intends the Tool Kit to be a "living" resource and welcomes suggestions for the further development. Email questions or suggestions to cafc@courts.mo.gov.

The Judge's Tool Kit On Pro Bono Legal Assistance.



Real attorneys
care ...
for people

Real attorneys
care ...
for justice.

Real attorneys
do pro bono.

The Judge's Tool Kit on Pro Bono

The Pro Se “Catch-22.”

Ever spun your wheels during a docket call while the judge attempted to explain basic court practices to a *pro se* litigant?

What was the outcome for the *pro se* person? For the efficiency of the courts? For the use of your and your client's time?

The Supreme Court recently published on-line resources to help judges and lawyers collaborate to address the problems of access to justice for those who cannot afford an attorney.

These problems not only affect the lives of low-income persons but also the workload of courts, the timeliness of court proceedings and peace and order within our communities.

What's in it?

In the Tool Kit you will find information on the problems, some resources to help with solutions for low-income litigants appearing before our courts and means to improve justice for those who may find it difficult to gain access to justice.

Topics include:

- A summary of the research as to the need.
- Discussion of ethical guidelines and duties for judges and lawyers.
- Information on existing *pro bono* programs.
- Practical tips on promoting *pro bono* involvement including:
 - how to recruit volunteers,
 - how judges can accommodate *pro bono* practice,
 - how to collaborate with existing providers,
 - how to reduce expenses of *pro bono* attorneys,
 - how to fund programs,
 - ways of recognizing volunteer attorneys for their contribution,
 - free malpractice protection for *pro bono* attorneys.
- Use of limited scope representation (LSR) to make *pro bono* work more time and cost efficient.
- Focus on the special needs of rural areas.

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